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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 000501

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [KTIP](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ES](#)
SUBJECT: LITTLE GOES ASSISTANCE FOR ADULT TRAFFICKING
VICTIMS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: LabOff visited a temporary shelter for child victims of trafficking on May 12. While at the shelter, children receive educational instruction, psychological services, and some vocational training. However, it is unclear what happens to adult trafficking victims. There is no shelter for adult victims, and an official at Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU) indicates that they cannot (or will not) accept trafficking victims into other adult shelters. We will address this issue at the earliest opportunity with the new Funes administration. En Summary.

CHILDREN RECEIVE SHELTER AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

¶2. (SBU) On May 12, LabOff visited the GOES temporary shelter for child victims of trafficking. Located in a residential neighborhood in San Salvador, the shelter is run by the Salvadoran Institute for Children and Adolescents (ISNA), staffed 24 hours a day, and is provided police protection. ISNA provides an on-staff psychologist, a part-time teacher, and some vocational training to victims. For Salvadoran victims, ISNA also evaluates homes before children are released to their families and will follow-up on children after their release when possible.

¶3. (SBU) As of May 12, the shelter housed 10 children, ranging from an infant to a 16 year old. The infant was the daughter of one of the teenage trafficking victims housed at the shelter. Shelter officials told us that victims usually were from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. While shelter occupancy usually averages about 14-15 children, it has a maximum capacity of 18 children.

¶4. (SBU) In addition to the shelter dedicated to trafficking victims, ISNA also runs 11 other homes for abused and neglected children, which currently house over 1000 children. One of those shelters is limited to special-needs children. The other shelters are divided by age and gender.

ADULT TRAFFICKING VICTIMS: NO PLACE TO GO

¶5. (C) Dr. Ricardo Martinez of the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU) told LabOff that, while ISDEMU provides shelter for adult female victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, there is not a shelter specifically dedicated to trafficking victims. He said that ISDEMU offers assistance to police and border officials and participates in the National Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons, but could not provide examples of this assistance. He mentioned that there was an initiative to establish a shelter for trafficking victims through Huellas, a Salvadoran non-governmental organization. According to the MFA and ISNA, the arrangement with Huellas was terminated in

late 2007.

¶6. (C) Martinez recounted a story of a female adult trafficking victim that was admitted to an ISDEMU shelter in ¶2006. He said that the woman "did not want to be helped" and alleged that she had attempted to establish a commercial sex ring within the shelter. He said that at that time ISDEMU realized they were not equipped to deal with trafficking victims. He confided to LabOff that ISDEMU had asked the National Civilian Police (PNC) to not send them any additional trafficking victims.

¶7. (SBU) According to the MFA, there were four cases involving adult trafficking victims in 2008. It is unclear what became of these victims after they were rescued.

¶8. (C) Comment: The GOES under the Saca administration has made progress in its treatment of child trafficking victims. However, it is clear that the Saca administration had no plan for dealing with adult victims. Aside from neglecting to offer vital victim services, it is unclear how the new administration intends to prosecute these cases when the victims are left to fend for themselves. We will raise this issue with First Lady Vanda Pignato at the earliest opportunity. She is the Secretary for Social Inclusion in the new administration, with responsibility for family welfare, ISNA, and related issues. End Comment.
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